

how the claims patentably distinguished over the cited references as described in applicant's response to the Office Action of August 21, 1998.

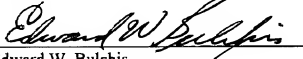
During a telephone interview with Examiner St-Cyr on June 16, 1999, the Examiner indicated that the claims would be allowable if the subject matter of claim 2 was added to all of the independent claims. The subject matter of claim 2 is primarily directed to the limitation of "associating the optical identification code on each of the integrated circuits with the corresponding electronic identification information."

All of the independent claims have been amended to incorporate this limitation with the exception of claim 14, which already contains essentially this limitation. Thus, claims 1 and 3-25 should now be in condition for allowance. If there is any reason why the Examiner does not believe that all of the claims are allowable, he is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney to discuss any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures:

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